

**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME  
DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES  
NEWS RELEASE**



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**2013 Yukon River Summer Salmon Fishery News Release # 11  
Summer Update # 2, Districts 1-6  
Districts Affected: Yukon Area**

**Assessment Projects**

Lower Yukon Test Fishery (LYTF)- 8.5-inch set net project/ADF&G, YDFDA

The first Chinook salmon were caught on June 10. The cumulative Chinook salmon CPUE through June 17 is 0.32, which is below the average of 2.74 for historical late years for this date.

Additionally, test fishing for Chinook with 8.25-inch drift gillnet gear began at the Big Eddy location on June 9. The cumulative Chinook salmon CPUE through June 17 is 13.85.

Summer Chum Drift Test Fishery- 5.5-inch drift net project/ADFG, YDFDA

The summer chum drift project began at the Big Eddy location on June 10 and operations at Middle Mouth began on June 13. The cumulative summer chum salmon CPUE through June 17 is 215.90 which is below the historical median of 556.09 for this date.

Pilot Station sonar project/ADFG

The project generated estimates starting June 13. Chinook salmon passage at Pilot Station sonar is estimated to be approximately 500 fish through June 16, which is below the average of 4,300 for historical late years for this date. Summer chum salmon passage is estimated to be approximately 7,700, which is below the median of 65,000 for this date.

*NOTE: Other assessment projects will be added as they become operational.*

## Age Composition

The Chinook salmon age composition from the 8.5-inch LYTF set nets and 8.25-inch drift nets through June 16 was 41% age-5, 56% age-6, and 3% age-7 fish. Females were 47%. The sample size was 32 fish.

The chum salmon age composition from the 5.5-inch LYTF drift nets through June 16 was 17% age-4 and 83% age-5 fish. Females were 52%. The sample size was 56 fish.

## **Assessment**

Assessment project operations in the Lower Yukon continue to be hindered due to high water and debris. Initial assessment of the salmon runs has been challenging. Subsistence effort in the lower river has increased during the last week. Subsistence fishermen have reported good catches of summer chum and low catches of Chinook salmon.

Based on the limited inseason information available, the Chinook salmon run timing is tracking similarly to the 2012 run, and is considerably later than historical averages based on test fishery indices. The historical average first quartile of the run at the Lower Yukon Test Fishery is June 15 while test fishery data is indicating that the run is just now beginning to enter the river. The historical average first quartile for other similar late run years is June 20. It is still too early in the run to estimate an inseason projection for the first quartile. However, based on historical run timing for late years, current test fishery data, and subsistence harvest reports in the lower river, it is likely that the first quartile could materialize later this week. The Pilot Station sonar recorded the first Chinook salmon on June 16 with a total passage of 509 fish, which is well below the cumulative historical average of 31,700 for this date and is also well below the cumulative average passage estimate of 4,300 at this point for late run years.

The summer chum salmon run is just starting to build as indicated by subsistence harvest reports, test fishery indices, and Pilot Station sonar passage estimates.

## **2013 Chinook and Summer Chum Outlooks**

### **Management Strategies**

The subsistence schedule continues to be progressively implemented upriver. Subdistricts 4-B, and 4-C will be the next area to have the schedule implemented along with a 6-inch or smaller mesh size restriction to conserve Chinook salmon.

Subsistence fishing will be closed to protect the first pulse of Chinook salmon. The department will continue to monitor the run to determine when to initiate the pulse closure in District 1. The closure will likely be announced via a short notice news release. The closure will be similarly implemented in upriver fishing districts and subdistricts based on migratory timing. Based on the poor preseason projection, it is likely the closure will be extended to protect the second pulse (meaning an approximately 10 day closure).

## **Current Management**

### **Subsistence Fishing:**

For the current subsistence schedule please call **(toll free): 1-866-479-7387**. The current subsistence fishing schedules are as follows:

**Coastal District:** Subsistence salmon fishing is open 7 days a week, 24 hours per day with gillnets restricted to 6-inch or smaller mesh size.

**District 1:** Subsistence salmon fishing is open for two 36-hour periods per week from 8:00 p.m. Thursdays until 8:00 a.m. Saturdays and from 8:00 p.m. Mondays until 8:00 a.m. Wednesdays, with gillnets restricted to 6-inch or smaller mesh size.

**Districts 2 and 3:** Subsistence salmon fishing is open for two 36-hour periods per week from 8:00 p.m. Wednesdays until 8:00 a.m. Fridays and from 8:00 p.m. Sundays until 8:00 a.m. Tuesdays with gillnets restricted to 6-inch or smaller mesh size.

**Subdistrict 4-A:** Subsistence salmon fishing is open for two 48-hour periods each week, from 6:00 p.m. Wednesdays until 6:00 p.m. Fridays and from 6:00 p.m. Sundays until 6:00 p.m. Tuesdays, with gillnets restricted to 6-inch or smaller mesh size. By regulation, fishermen in Subdistrict 4-A may use drift gillnets during scheduled subsistence fishing periods on the mainstem of the Yukon River from June 10 to July 14.

**Subdistrict 4-B, C:** Subsistence salmon fishing is currently open 7 days per week, 24 hours a day and fishermen may use gillnet with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or less until the regulatory schedule begins.

Effective 6:00 p.m. Wednesday, June 19, subsistence salmon fishing in Subdistricts 4-B and 4-C will consist of two 48-hour periods each week, from 6:00 p.m. Wednesdays until 6:00 p.m. Fridays and from 6:00 p.m. Sundays until 6:00 p.m. Tuesdays, with gillnets restricted to 6-inch or smaller mesh size.

**Subdistricts 5-A,B,C:** Subsistence salmon fishing is currently open seven days per week, 24 hours a day and fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or less.

Effective 6:00 p.m. Tuesday, June 25, subsistence salmon fishing will consist of two 48-hour periods each week, from 6:00 p.m. Tuesdays until 6:00 p.m. Thursdays and from 6:00 p.m. Fridays until 6:00 p.m. Sundays, with gillnets restricted to 6-inch or smaller mesh size to conserve Chinook salmon.

**Subdistricts 5-D:** Subsistence salmon fishing is currently open 7 days per week, 24 hours a day and fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or smaller. The department will notify fishermen in Subdistrict 5-D by June 27 concerning when gillnets will be restricted to 6-inch or smaller mesh size to conserve Chinook salmon.

**District 6:** The subsistence salmon fishing schedule consists of two 42-hour fishing periods per week from 6:00 p.m. Mondays until 12:00 noon Wednesdays and from 6:00 p.m. Fridays until 12:00 noon Sundays and fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or less.

**Old Minto Area:** Subsistence salmon fishing is open 5 days per week from 6:00 p.m. Fridays until 6:00 p.m. Wednesdays and fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or less.

**Innoko River:** Subsistence salmon fishing is open 7 days a week, 24 hours per day with gillnets restricted to 6-inch or smaller mesh size.

**Koyukuk River:** Subsistence salmon fishing is currently open seven days per week, 24 hours a day and fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or less. Effective 6:00 p.m. Wednesday, June 19, gillnets will be restricted to 6-inch or smaller mesh size and subsistence salmon fishing will be open 7 days a week, 24 hours per day.

During subsistence salmon fishing closures, fish wheels may not be operated and gillnets with a mesh size greater than four inches and a length greater than 60 feet must be removed from the water.

### **Commercial Fishing:**

Under new commercial fishing regulations adopted by the Alaska Board of Fisheries in 2013, the department may by emergency order allow the use of dip nets and beach seines. These new gear options are intended to allow for additional summer chum directed commercial fishing opportunity while allowing for the release of incidentally caught Chinook salmon.

**District 1 Commercial Beach Seine and Dip Net:** Commercial salmon fishing in District 1 will be open 12:00 noon Tuesday, June 18, until 12:00 Midnight Tuesday, June 18 with beach seine and dip net gear only. This will be a 12-hour commercial fishing period. Beach seine mesh size is restricted to 4-inch or smaller mesh size. Dip net mesh size is restricted 4.5-inch or smaller mesh. A commercial permit holder may operate up to four dip nets.

Fishermen employing dip nets or beach seine gear are required to immediately release incidentally caught Chinook salmon back to the water alive. Chinook salmon caught and released must be recorded on a fish ticket. In the event that a Chinook salmon is killed by these gear types, the dead Chinook salmon must be recorded on a fish ticket and forfeited to the state.

The subsistence fishing schedule and recorded fishery announcements will be available 24 hours a day at 1-866-479-7387. If you have any questions regarding this report, please call the ADFG office in Emmonak at 949-1320. The Emmonak ADF&G office will stand by on VHF channel 7A.